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FAREWELL ADDRESS,

TO THE

SECOND CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN BOSTON,

DELIVERED OCTOBER 4, 1830.

BY HENRY WARE, JR.

PRINTED BY REQUEST,

NOT PUBLISHED.

BOSTON,
PRINTED BY ISAAC R. BUTTS.
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PUBLIC LIBRARY
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CITY OF BOSTON

Boston, Oct. 10, 1830.

Rev. Henry Ware, Jr.

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the male members of the Second Church and Society held this day, we were appointed a committee to wait on you and thank you for your very solemn and affectionate parting Address, delivered to them the last Lord's Day, and to ask you for a copy for the press, for the purpose of distribution *in the Society.* In compliance thereto, we respectfully request that you will grant us a copy as soon as your convenience will permit.

Very respectfully and truly,
Your Friends, and Humble Servants,

Enoch Patterson,
Abel Adams,
Gedney King,
} *Committee.*

Cambridge, Oct. 11, 1830.

Gentlemen,

I readily accede to the request of the Second Church and Society, that I would grant them a copy of my Address at parting from them. It should have been more worthy of their acceptance had I been allowed to go at length into many topics on which I wished, but had not time to speak to them. As it is, it is simply a parting token of my gratitude and affection, which I beg them to receive as the memorial of a sincere friend.

I am, Gentlemen,
With sincere regard,
Your Friend and Servant,
HENRY WARE, Jr.

Messrs Patterson, Adams, and King.

ADDRESS.

Brethren and Friends,

The course of Providence has brought us to the day in which I appear before you in the relation of your minister for the last time. I cannot suffer it to pass by and separate us without a parting word. The bond which has so happily connected us, was consecrated in this holy place with formal ceremony, and many words of religious solemnity. It ought not to be severed in silence. And I would make an unaccustomed effort, that these walls may once more resound with my voice, while I commune with you on the past, and utter the sentiments which belong to the present.

The bond between minister and people is near and peculiar. It ought not to be formed inconsiderately; it must not be broken rashly. Strong, deep, fervent affections are bound up with it; tender and intimate feelings surround and hallow it. When confirmed by time and intimacy, if it should be rudely ruptured, many hearts are torn; even when gently severed, many hearts bleed. *Our* separation — blessed be He who in judg-

ment always remembers mercy — is not sudden nor abrupt — is not the consequence of dissension, dissatisfaction, or division — has not been sought or desired on either side. It is the gradual result of circumstances, ordered not by man, but by an uncontrollable Providence, which arrested the minister in the midst of his labors, when he was engaged in them with more than usual satisfaction, and more than usual encouragement; — a providence, which, having withdrawn him from your service, presented to you at once a man on whom your hearts could rest, and provided for him another sphere of duty. We separate, therefore, in unbroken goodwill; and commend each other to God as we part, not only from a sense of christian duty, but with a warm sentiment of brotherly affection. It is a reason for devout gratitude to-day, that, with all the trials which have borne upon us, and introduced this event, we have been spared that bitterest of all — alienation and dissension.

It is impossible on the arrival of a moment like this — when one scene of life closes, and one long period of accountableness is made up for judgment — not to look back and survey that period with anxious retrospection. In doing this, many reflections crowd upon the mind which may not be communicated to others; and some, which it would be wrong not to utter. Of such I would speak briefly, as in the midst of friends who will not misunderstand me, nor require an apology for the egotism of the occasion.

If I were to mention all that I discern in the past of error, negligence, unfaithfulness, on my own part, I should only unnecessarily pain you, and perhaps seem to be making an exhibition of humility. But some of you will understand me when I say, that I feel I need their forgiveness for instances of what must have seemed to them culpable remissness; and I cannot be at ease, except by hoping that they have granted it. Indeed, no one who has not experienced the difficulty of always doing all that is to be done in the complicated and trying walks of the pastoral office, can guess with what bitterness a minister is sometimes compelled to reproach himself, and how the kind approbation of his friends serves only to humble and rebuke him under a consciousness that he ill deserves it. For you—you have borne with my weakness, overlooked my neglects, been liberal to my necessities, candid to my faults. I can only thank you for that indulgence which has made my path pleasantness and peace; and beseech you to cheer the way of my successor with similar kindness.

Yet, whatever may have been my failure in executing the plan of my ministry, with the plan itself I perceive no reason to be dissatisfied. Being persuaded that the private duties of personal and pastoral intercourse are at least as important as the public exercises of the pulpit, and in fact necessary to their efficiency and success, it has been my wish and purpose to give much of my time and affections peculiarly to this sphere of action. If I have done any good, I attribute it almost entirely to the opportunities and power which I have in this way

gained. That I have done no more, I feel now to be mainly owing to remissness, irresolution, and want of exact method in prosecuting this, the most difficult as well as important department of the minister's labors.

The same may be said in regard to the instruction of the children and youth of the congregation,—always an essential and favorite part of my plan, though pursued with so little systematic perseverance.

As regards the manner in which I have proposed to discharge the great function of preaching God's word, it has simply been my endeavor to administer a suitable mixture of doctrinal instruction and moral exhortation; to state distinctly what seem to be the truths of revelation, accompanied always with expositions and illustrations from the scriptures, and with explicit application to the characters and consciences of those who hear. I have wished to give you neither doctrinal discussions, nor moral speculations in any other form than as drawn from the gospel of Jesus Christ, and singly designed to affect our hearts and lives. Undoubtedly I have failed of realizing my own standard; but I look back with shame to every instance in which I allowed any circumstances to lead me astray from this right and true path, into a more showy but less profitable method.

If I thus survey with mixt feelings the conduct of my ministry, in a similar manner do I regard its *success*. In some respects it is grateful to me, in some respects it is sad. I think that I have seen, upon the whole, a general improvement in the religious condition of the congregation. Some individuals I have witnessed making noise-

less, and steady, persevering progress in a religious character. Some I have seen reformed from worldliness and sin, and changed into conscientious followers of the christian life. Some I have seen growing up from childhood to manhood, uniformly attached to the truth, and influenced by a regard to God. I have witnessed in general a punctual attendance on public worship, and have found encouragement from many who sought edification at more private religious exercises during the week. A larger proportion than formerly have been induced to profess their faith at the Lord's table; and if many still refrain without sufficient apology, I am willing at least to share the blame of their neglect—for if I had done my whole duty in regard to that ordinance, who can tell but they might have done theirs? Finally, in plans of general good, and contributions for religious charity, I have never wanted countenance and aid; and though not among the wealthiest, I will not deny myself the pleasure of saying, that the Second Church has been among the readiest and most liberal of givers.

In these particulars I have expressed, and do express, my satisfaction—devoutly thankful to God, that he appointed me to labor where my labors were seconded, and I could see that I did not toil wholly in vain.

Yet, friends and brethren, I should be false to you and to the truth, should I leave you with the pleasant impression that there is nothing to be rebuked, lamented, or improved among you. Alas, it cannot be so; and it will be a useful exercise for you also to look back impartially to-day, and awaken your consciences; for you

are no less accountable than your minister for the connexion which is now closing. I exhort you, therefore, as in the presence of Him who sees all hearts, and as those who must give account—to give one hour to consideration to-day. Ask yourselves how far you have been faithful to your privileges? how far you have used them diligently to promote your religious knowledge, and advance your christian standing? Can you perceive that you are better men, more devout, benevolent, and thoughtful? Or have all these years, with their sabbaths, prayers, and exhortations, passed over and left you as you were? Alas, is it not to be feared that there are many among you who can answer these questions with little satisfaction? who have moved on year after year unimproved, and are going down to their graves as ignorant and imperfect as they were fourteen years ago? Will they not look at themselves now?—Will they not heed a parting exhortation, though they have heard so many in vain? *To-day*, at least, let them not harden their hearts. 'For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and loose his own soul?' *

But there are others to whom I look with pleasure and congratulation. I have witnessed the growth of their faith, I have seen the advancement of their virtue, I have known their perseverance in good works. To them I say, Go on, and the Lord go with you in peace

* These words were the text of Mr Emerson's sermon preached just before the delivery of this Address.

and strength. And yet, what I say unto all, I say also unto them — WATCH.

And now, brethren, my work among you is ended. Such as it has been, it is over. For you, and for me, the account is sealed up for a solemn judgment. The day is coming which will try it as with fire, and disclose to us its true character, with all its lasting consequences. Join me, brethren, in the prayer, that God will show mercy in that day!

Meantime, we are to finish our mortal probation apart. Yet I cannot feel that I shall be separated from you. This house will long seem to me my own religious home, and those who worship here, the members of my own religious household. Still, as returns the hallowed day, my spirit will come up among you, as it has done from across the ocean, and amid the worship of strange lands, to join in your praises, and bend with you at the mercy-seat. And when the day shall arrive that these temples have mouldered, and all earthly worship ceased — when the scattered congregations of the saints shall assemble together with the church of the first-born in heaven — then, too, it is my hope and prayer that we shall be found side by side in the worship of eternity, and accompany one another still in that career of infinite progress and spiritual glory which we commenced together here.

In this hope, I bid you — as your minister — farewell. I rejoice that I do not leave you alone, but to the guidance of able hands, and the instruction of faithful lips. God bestow upon your minister and upon you, the choicest

of spiritual blessings! May he lead, support, encourage, cheer, and save you! May the spirit of Christ dwell in you richly with all wisdom; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, abide among you and sanctify you always!